

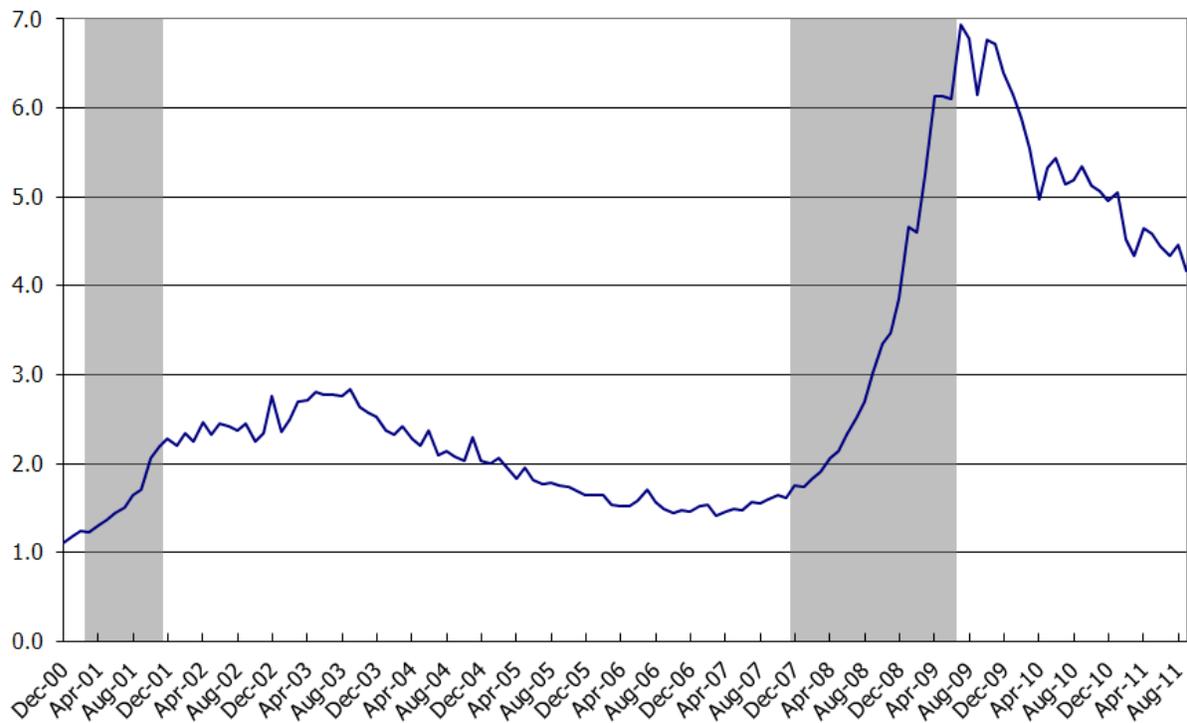


Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey
Highlights
September 2011

Bureau of Labor Statistics

November 8, 2011

**Chart 1. Number of unemployed persons per job opening
Seasonally adjusted**

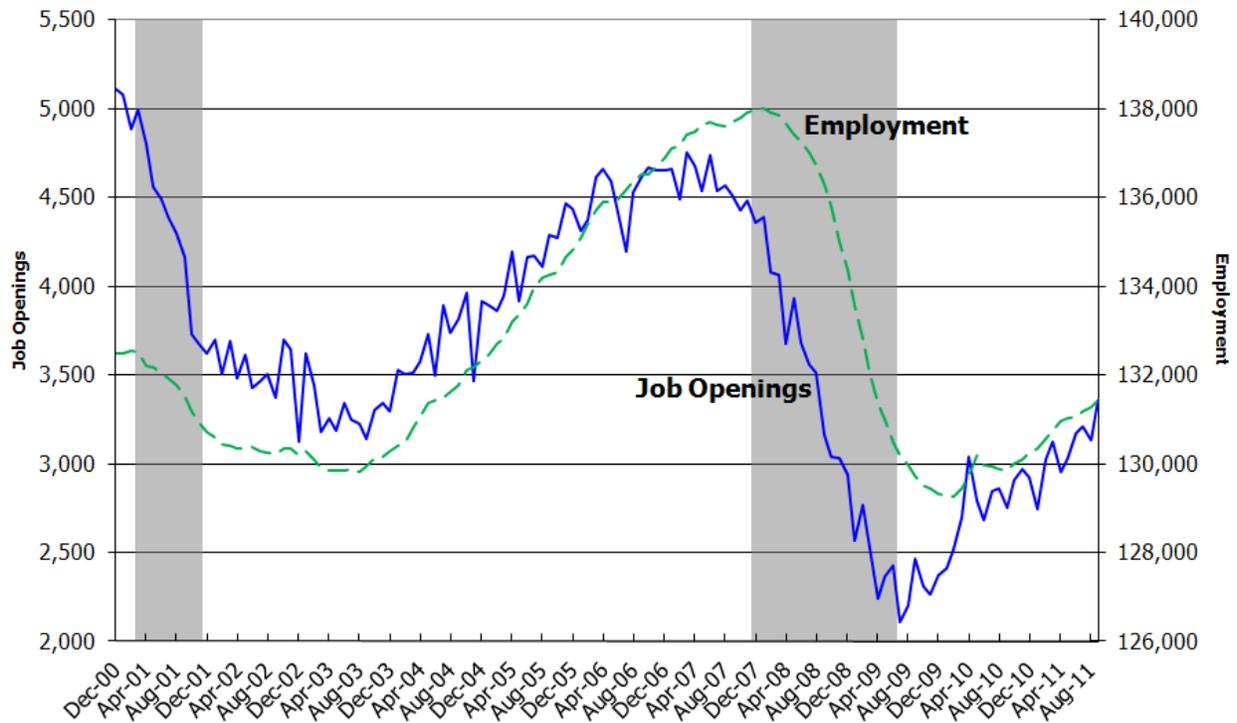


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey and Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, November 8, 2011.

Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

- The ratio between the unemployment level and job openings level changes over time.
- When the recent recession began (December 2007), the number of unemployed persons per job opening was 1.8. When the recession ended (June 2009), there were 6.1 unemployed persons per job opening.
- The unemployed persons per job opening ratio has trended downward since the end of the recession and was 4.2 in September 2011.

**Chart 2. Job openings and employment
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands**

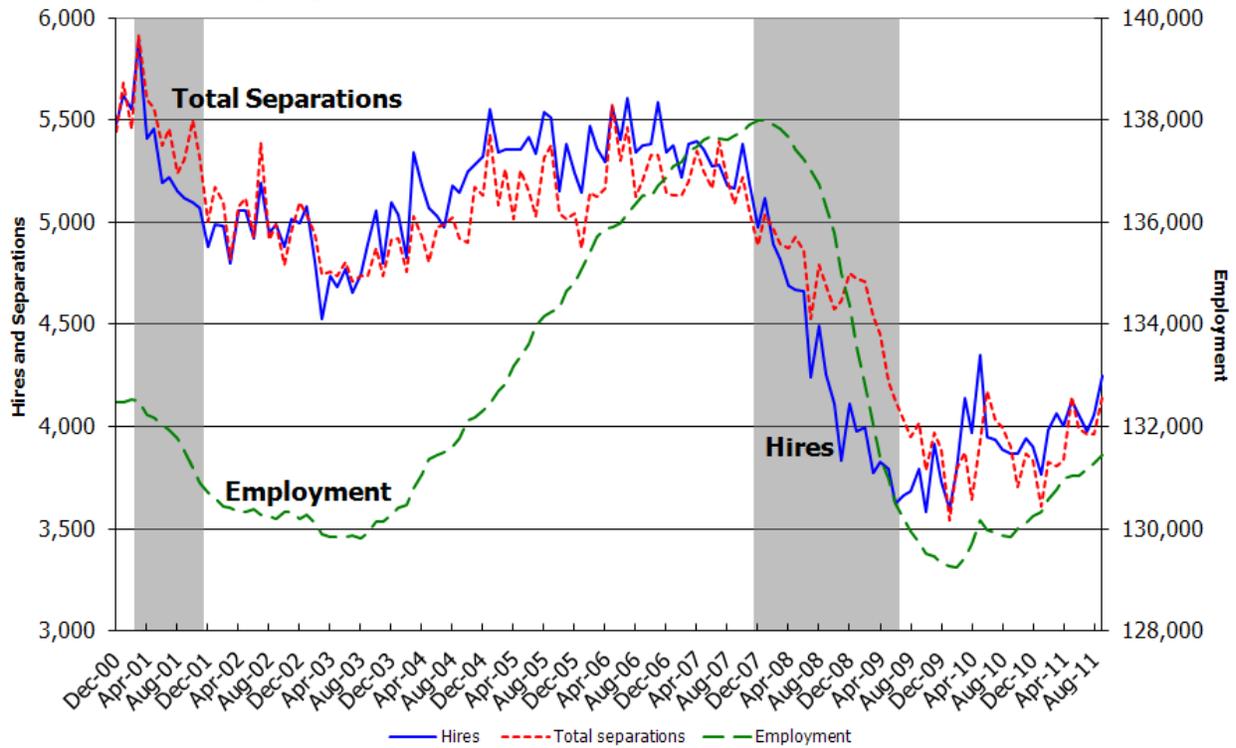


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Survey and Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, November 8, 2011.

Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

- The number of job openings declined to a series low in July 2009, one month after the official end of the recent recession. Employment continued to decline after the end of the recession, reaching a low point in February 2010.
- In September there were 3.4 million job openings, which was 59 percent higher than the series low in July 2009. The level was still well below the 4.8 million openings at the peak in March 2007.

Chart 3. Hires, total separations, and employment
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

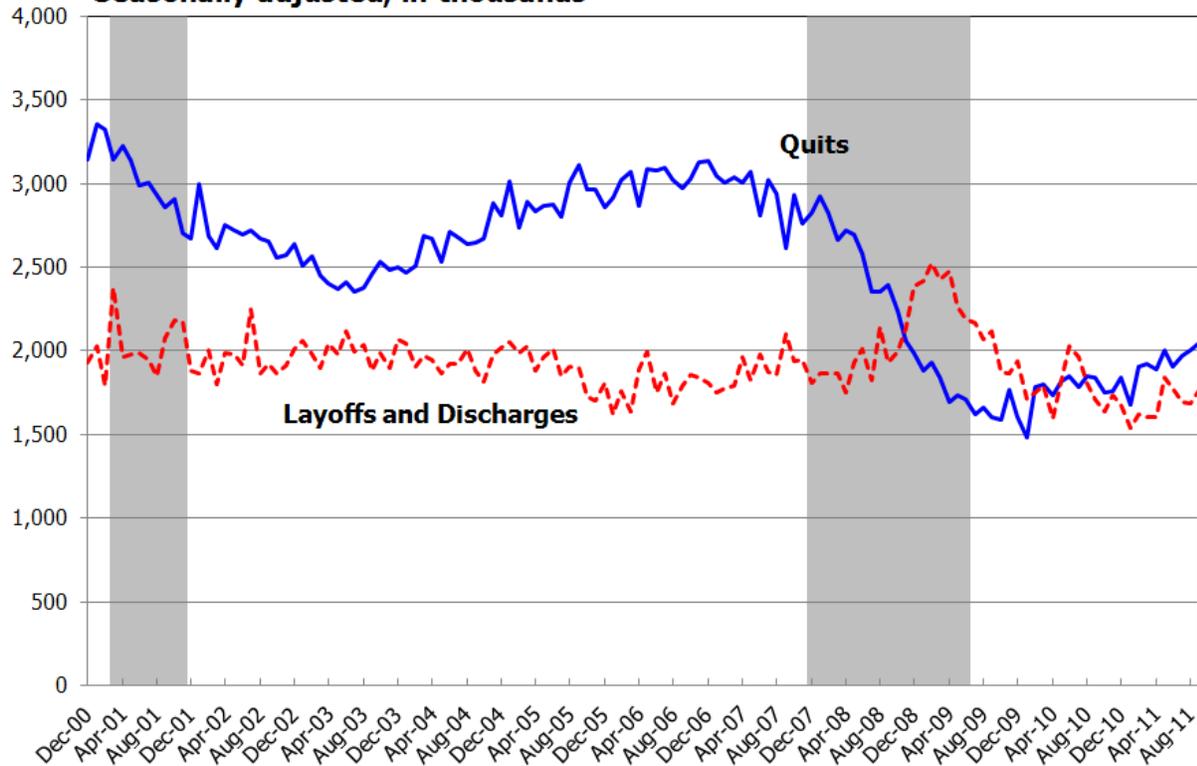


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Survey and Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, November 8, 2011.

Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

- Hires, total separations, and employment all remained below pre-recession levels in September 2011.
- In September there were 4.2 million hires, which was 19 percent higher than the recent low in October 2009.
- There were 4.1 million total separations in September.

Chart 4. Quits and layoffs and discharges
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

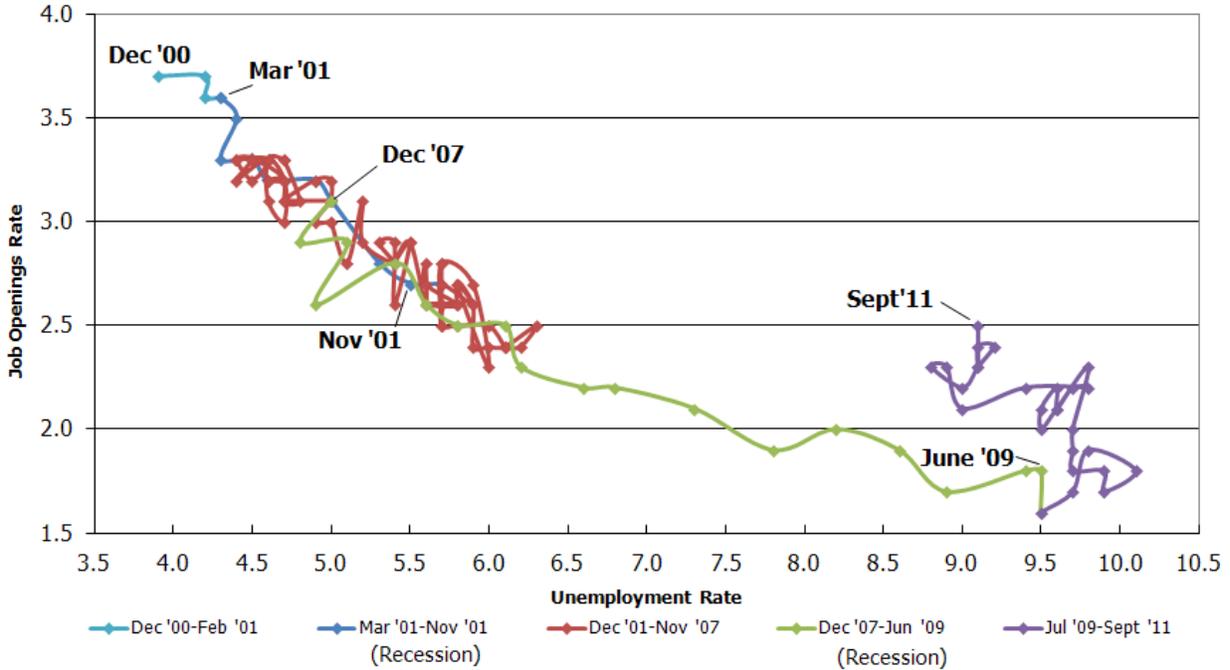


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, November 8, 2011.

Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

- Quits tend to rise when there is a perception that jobs are available and tend to fall when there is a perception that jobs are scarce.
- The number of quits has exceeded the number of layoffs and discharges for most of the 10-year JOLTS history. During the latest recession, this relationship changed as layoffs and discharges outnumbered quits from November 2008 through January 2010.
- In September 2011, there were 2.0 million quits, still well below the 2.8 million quits in December 2007, the first month of the recession.
- Layoffs and Discharges have returned to pre-recession levels, measuring 1.8 million in September.

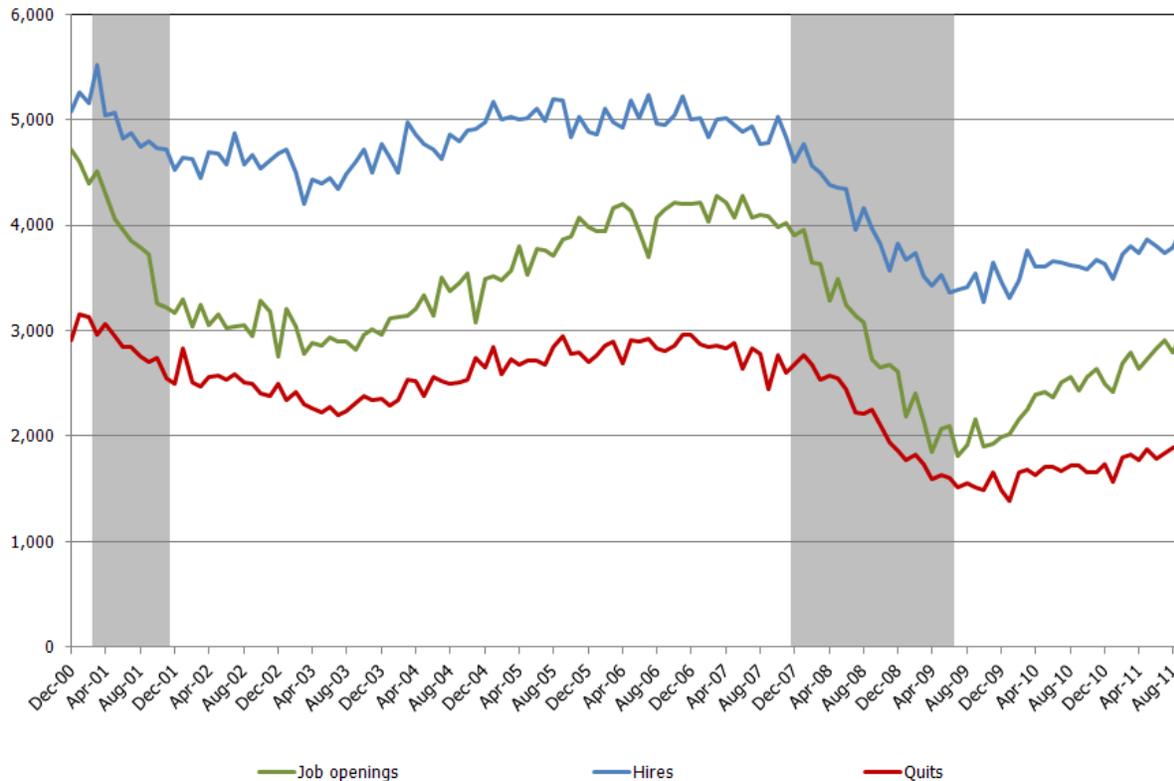
**Chart 5. The Beveridge Curve (job openings vs. unemployment rate)
Seasonally adjusted**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey and Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, November 8, 2011.

- This graph plots the JOLTS job openings rate against the CPS unemployment rate. This graphical representation of the relationship between the unemployment rate and the vacancy rate is known as the Beveridge Curve, named after the British economist William Henry Beveridge (1879-1963). The economy's position on the downward sloping Beveridge Curve reflects the state of the business cycle.
- During an expansion, the unemployment rate is low and the vacancy rate is high. During a contraction, the unemployment rate is high and the vacancy rate is low. The position of the curve is determined by the efficiency of the labor market. For example, a greater mismatch between available jobs and the unemployed in terms of skills or location would cause the curve to shift outward, up and toward the right.
- From the start of the recent recession in December 2007 through the end of 2009, each month's point on the curve moved lower and further to the right as the job openings rate declined and the unemployment rate rose. In 2010, each month's point moved up and to the left on the curve as the job openings rate increased and the unemployment rate decreased.
- In September 2011, the job openings rate increased to 2.5 percent and the unemployment rate remained 9.1 percent.

Chart 6. Total private job openings, hires, and quits
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

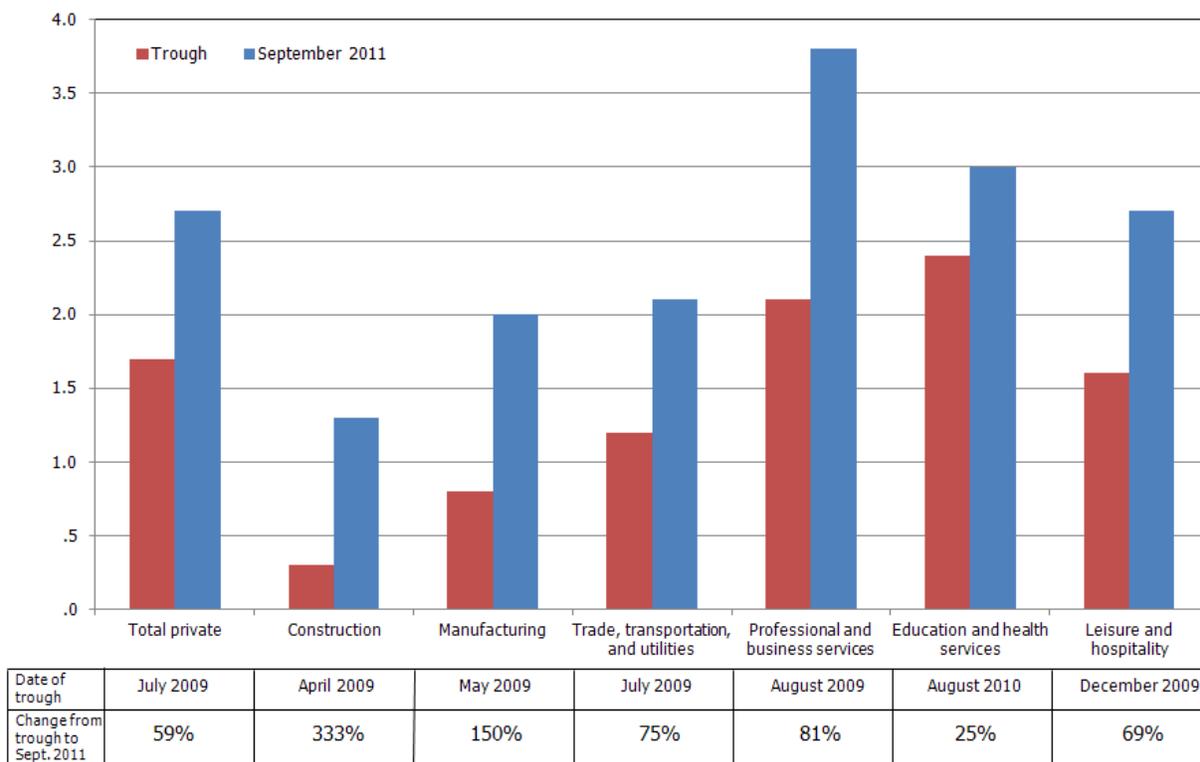


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, November 8, 2011.

Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

- Since reaching their respective post-recession troughs, the number of job openings has steadily increased but the number of hires and quits have increased slightly.
- Job openings in the private sector decreased steeply due to the recession, falling from 3.9 million in December 2007 (the beginning of the recession) to a low of 1.8 million in July 2009. Since the trough in July 2009, the number of openings has increased by 65 percent, reaching 3.0 million in September 2011.
- Hires in the private sector also fell throughout the recession, although less steeply than job openings, falling from 4.6 million in December 2007 to a low of 3.3 million in October 2009. Since the trough, the number of hires has increased by 22%, to 4.0 million in September 2011.
- Quits in the private sector declined at about the same pace as hires during the recession, starting at 2.7 million in December 2007 and reaching a low of 1.4 million in January 2010. Since the trough, the number of quits has increased by 39%, measuring 1.9 million in September 2011.

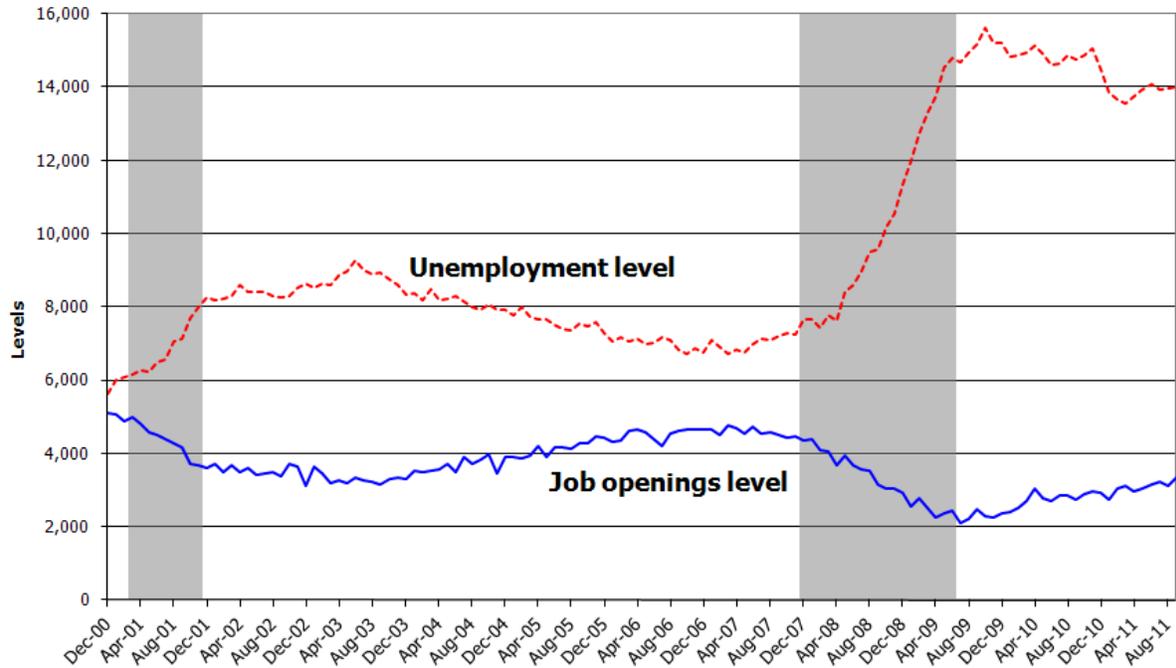
**Chart 7. Job openings rates by industry, trough vs. September 2011
Seasonally adjusted**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, November 8, 2011.

- The total private job openings rate has been trending upward since the trough in July 2009.
- Each sector was affected by the recession in different ways and to different degrees. The sectors reached low points (troughs) at different times, all between April 2009 and August 2010. The recovery from the recession has also been different across sectors.
- The sectors contributing the most to the rise in the total private job openings rate are construction and manufacturing. Since their troughs, the job openings rate in these sectors has risen by 333 percent and 150 percent respectively.
- The sectors with the smallest rise in the job openings rate since their respective troughs are leisure and hospitality (up 69 percent) and education and health services (up 25 percent).

Chart 8. Job openings levels and unemployment levels
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

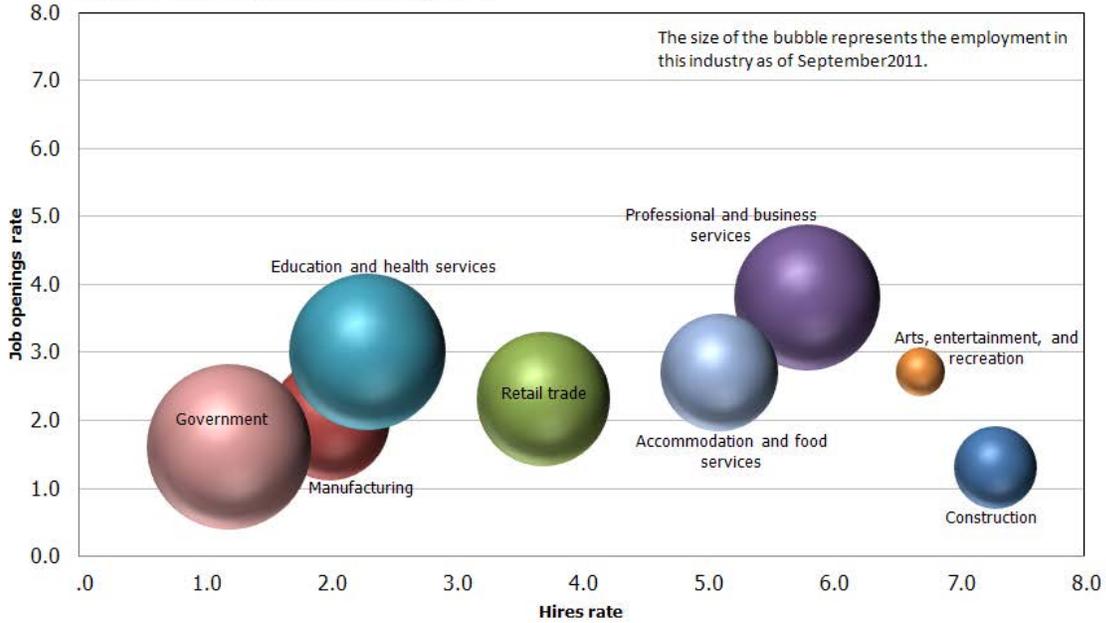


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey and Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, November 8, 2011.

Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

- The unemployment level and the job openings level move inversely to one another. During an economic downturn, the unemployment level rises and the job openings level declines. During an economic expansion, the reverse occurs.
- In September 2011, the unemployment level was 14.0 million, much higher than the 7.7 million unemployed in December 2007, the start of the recession.
- The job openings level was 3.4 million in September, down 23 percent from its December 2007 level.

**Chart 9. Job openings rates, hires rates, and employment by select industries
September 2011, seasonally adjusted**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Survey and Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, November 8, 2011.

- Arts, entertainment, and recreation had a high job openings rate and one of the highest hires rates in September, indicating that despite strong hiring, even more employees were needed.
- Education and health services had a high job openings rate and relatively low hires rate in September, indicating that the needed employees were not hired.
- Construction had a high hires rate and a low job openings rate in September, indicating that employees were needed and were easily hired.